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Libel action by leading West German news publication, Der Spiegel, against Now Magazine et al withdrawn.

The parties agree that Soviet Intelligence Agencies seek to manipulate Free World Media with forgeries and deliberate falsehoods.

Mr. John Wilmers QC - Counsel for the Plaintiffs

My Lord, I with my Learned friends Mr Charles Gray and Mr. Andrew Monson represent the Plaintiffs who are the owners and publisher of the West German weekly magazine Der Spiegel. My Learned friends Lord Rawlinson, Mr. Andrew Bateson, Mr. James Price and Mr. Mark Warby represent the Defendants Sir James Goldsmith, Cavenham Communications Limited and Mr. Anthony Shrimley.

On the 21st day of January, 1981 Sir James Goldsmith delivered a speech to the Media Committee of the Conservative Party in the House of Commons which was subsequently published, *inter alia*, in Now magazine, edited by Anthony Shrimley.

This speech dealt with Soviet propaganda and the systematic manipulation of the western media by certain organs of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Sir James went on to describe the three major organisations used for this purpose and which report to the Politburo in Moscow: the International Department headed by Boris Ponomarev; the International Information Department headed by Leonid Zamiatin and the KGB controlled Soviet propaganda organisation called Service A which is part of the KGB's First Chief Directorate. Service A plans, coordinates and supports secret operations which are designed to back up overt Soviet propaganda.

As an example, Sir James made reference to information provided by General Jan Sejna, a former high official of the Czechoslovak government, and former Secretary of the Czechoslovak ruling party's Defence Committee, who defected in 1968. Sir James stated "General Sejna, the high-ranking Czech intelligence defector, admitted that the campaign by the German news magazine Der Spiegel to discredit Franz Josef Strauss was orchestrated by the KGB."

It is to this reference that the Plaintiffs have taken exception in that they felt that it implied that the magazine

was under the control of the KGB, knowingly employ journalists who are communist intelligence agents and in fact are a KGB front organisation. My clients were concerned to refute and deny any such suggestions and to ensure that their journalistic and editorial independence is not in question.

Lord Rawlinson QC - Counsel for the Defendants Sir James' position is that in pursuance of their policies, the Soviets conduct massive and continuous propaganda campaigns both OVERT and COVERT - the former through overtly controlled Communist media throughout the world, the latter consisting of the dissemination and planting of stories, many of which are based on forgeries and deliberate falsehoods known as "disinformation".

The ultimate object of the campaigns is the undermining of free western societies and political systems. In particular they aim to promote ideas, individuals and governments helpful to Soviet strategy and conversely to discredit those hostile to the interests of Communism.

In pursuance of their aims the Soviets make use of unwitting Western media. In addition to the overtly controlled Communist press - the value of which is limited since the sources are publicly known - there is a major and continuous effort to plant propaganda covertly through well placed agents of influence who themselves may be either conscious or unconscious of the role that they are playing. The media thus used are not intended to realise that they are participating in KGB orchestrated campaigns.

It is Sir James' position that in pursuance of these policies, the Soviets made a conscious decision to seek to discredit the West German politician Dr. Franz Josef Strauss and mounted a campaign of defamation, disinformation and provocation against him. Franz Josef Strauss was Minister of Defence in Chancellor Adenauer's govern-

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